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**CENSUS BUREAU REPORTS ON RESIDENTIAL VACANCIES AND  
HOMEOWNERSHIP**

National vacancy rates in the fourth quarter 2005 were 9.6 percent for rental housing and 2.0 percent for homeowner housing, the Department of Commerce's Census Bureau announced today. The Census Bureau said the rental vacancy rate was not different from the fourth quarter rate last year (10.0 percent) or the rate last quarter (9.9 percent). For homeowner vacancies, the current rate (2.0 percent) was higher than the rate a year ago (1.8 percent), but not different from the rate last quarter (1.9 percent). The homeownership rate (69.0 percent) for the current quarter was not different from the fourth quarter 2004 rate (69.2 percent) or the rate last quarter (68.8 percent).

**Table 1. Rental and Homeowner Vacancy Rates for the United States: 1994 to 2005 (in percent)**

Year	Rental vacancy rate				Homeowner vacancy rate			
	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2005....	10.1	9.8	9.9	9.6	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.0
2004....	10.4	10.2	10.1	10.0	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8
2003....	9.4	9.6	9.9	10.2	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.8
2002 <sup>a</sup> ..	9.1	8.4	9.0	9.3	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
2002....	9.1	8.5	9.1	9.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
2001....	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.8	1.5	1.8	1.9	1.8
2000.....	7.9	8.0	8.2	7.8	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6
1999.....	8.2	8.1	8.2	7.9	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6
1998.....	7.7	8.0	8.2	7.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8
1997.....	7.5	7.9	7.9	7.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.7
1996.....	7.9	7.8	8.0	7.7	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.7
1995.....	7.4	7.7	7.7	7.7	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6
1994.....	7.5	7.4	7.2	7.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6

<sup>a</sup>Revised in 2002 to incorporate information collected in Census 2000.

NOTE: The estimates in this report are based on responses from a sample of the population and may differ from actual values because of sampling variability or other factors. As a result, apparent differences between the estimates for two or more groups may not be statistically significant. All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing and are significant at the 90-percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. The data in this report are from the monthly samples of the Housing Vacancy Survey, which is a supplement to the Current Population Survey. The populations represented (the population universe) are all housing units (vacancy rates) and the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States (homeownership rate). For an explanation of how the rates are calculated, please see pages 10-11.

For rental housing by area, the fourth quarter 2005 vacancy rates in central cities (9.4 percent), the suburbs (9.3 percent), and outside Core-Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs), 10.9 percent, were not different from each other respectively. (see NOTE below).

The homeowner vacancy rates by area for fourth quarter 2005 were highest in central cities (2.7 percent), followed by outside CBSAs (2.1 percent), with the lowest rate being in the suburbs (1.7 percent).

Among regions, the rental vacancy rates for the current quarter were highest in the Midwest (12.3 percent) and the South (11.4 percent), although they were not different from each other. The lowest rates were in the West (7.0 percent) and the Northeast (6.7 percent), which were also not different from each other. Regional rates were lower than a year ago in the South, while the Northeast, the Midwest, and the West were not different from their respective rates last year.

Comparisons of the regional homeowner vacancy rates for fourth quarter 2005 showed the highest rates in the Midwest (2.4 percent) and the South (2.2 percent), although they were not different from each other. Rates were lowest in the Northeast (1.6 percent) and West (1.7 percent), which were also not different from each other. When compared with fourth quarter 2004, the homeowner vacancy rate in the Northeast was higher, while other rates by region were not different from their respective rates a year ago.

**Table 2. Rental and Homeowner Vacancy Rates by Area and Region: Fourth Quarter 2004 and 2005 (in percent)**

Area/Region	Rental vacancy rates				Homeowner vacancy rates			
	Fourth Quarter 2004	Fourth Quarter 2005	90-Percent Confidence Interval ( $\pm$ ) <sup>a</sup>		Fourth Quarter 2004	Fourth Quarter 2005	90-Percent Confidence Interval ( $\pm$ ) <sup>a</sup>	
			of 2005 rate	of difference			of 2005 rate	of difference
United States.....	10.0	9.6	0.4	0.5	1.8	2.0	0.1	0.2
Inside Core-Based Statistical Areas.....	(NA)	9.4	0.5	(NA)	(NA)	2.0	0.2	(NA)
In central cities.....	(NA)	9.4	0.6	(NA)	(NA)	2.7	0.3	(NA)
Not in central cities (suburbs).....	(NA)	9.3	0.7	(NA)	(NA)	1.7	0.1	(NA)
Outside Core-Based Statistical Areas.....	(NA)	10.9	1.6	(NA)	(NA)	2.1	0.3	(NA)
Northeast.....	6.8	6.7	0.7	0.8	1.2	1.6	0.3	0.3
Midwest.....	12.4	12.3	0.9	1.0	2.2	2.4	0.3	0.3
South.....	12.5	11.4	0.9	1.0	2.0	2.2	0.2	0.3
West.....	7.2	7.0	0.8	0.9	1.5	1.7	0.2	0.3

<sup>a</sup>A 90-percent confidence interval is a measure of an estimate's reliability. The larger the confidence interval is, in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. For more information, see page 10. (NA) Not Available.

NOTE: Core-Based Statistical Area data for 2005 and later are not comparable to earlier data. Beginning in first quarter 2005, the Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey is using the new metropolitan and micropolitan statistical definitions that were announced by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in June 2003, and were based on the application of the 2000 standards to Census 2000 data. The OMB announced updates as of December 2003, based on application of the 2000 standards to more recent Census Bureau estimates. The December 2003 definitions are available at:

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/metrodef.html>.

There were an estimated 124.5 million housing units in the United States in the fourth quarter 2005. Approximately 108.9 million housing units were occupied: 75.2 million by owners and 33.7 million by renters. Both the number of owner-occupied units and the number of renter-occupied units were higher than their respective estimates a year ago. Of the 15.6 million vacant housing units, 11.9 million were for year-round use. Approximately 3.6 million of the year-round vacant units were for rent, 1.6 million were for sale only, and the remaining 6.7 million units were vacant for a variety of other reasons.

**Table 3. Estimates of the Total Housing Inventory for the United States:  
Fourth Quarter 2004 and 2005**

(Estimates are in thousands and may not add to total, due to rounding)

Type	Fourth Quarter 2004	Fourth Quarter 2005	90-Percent Confidence Interval ( $\pm$ ) <sup>a</sup>		Percent of total (2005)
			of 2005 estimate	of difference	
All housing units.....	122,740	124,509	(X)	(X)	100
Occupied.....	107,546	108,888	325	296	87
Owner.....	74,413	75,163	629	430	60
Renter.....	33,133	33,725	535	413	27
Vacant.....	15,194	15,621	350	310	13
Year-round.....	11,675	11,857	343	296	10
For rent.....	3,731	3,626	169	190	3
For sale only.....	1,375	1,566	95	116	1
Other.....	6,569	6,665	260	229	5
Seasonal.....	3,519	3,764	223	192	3

<sup>a</sup>A 90-percent confidence interval is a measure of an estimate's reliability. The larger the confidence interval is, in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. For more information, see page 10.

(X) Not Applicable. Since the number of housing units is set equal to an independent national measure, there is no sampling error, and hence no confidence interval.

NOTE: Since first quarter 2003, the Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey (CPS/HVS) estimates have been controlled to independent housing unit counts. Doing so should make the CPS/HVS estimates of housing units more comparable to other Census Bureau housing surveys. Please see page 10 for additional information.

The homeownership rate (69.0 percent) for the current quarter was not different from the fourth quarter 2004 rate (69.2 percent) or the rate last quarter (68.8 percent).

Table 4. **Homeownership Rates for the United States: 1980 to 2005** (in percent)

Year	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>			
	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2005.....	69.1	68.6	68.8	69.0
2004.....	68.6	69.2	69.0	69.2
2003.....	68.0	68.0	68.4	68.6
2002 <sup>b</sup> .....	67.8	67.6	68.0	68.3
2002.....	67.8	67.6	68.0	68.3
2001.....	67.5	67.7	68.1	68.0
2000.....	67.1	67.2	67.7	67.5
1999.....	66.7	66.6	67.0	66.9
1998.....	65.9	66.0	66.8	66.4
1997.....	65.4	65.7	66.0	65.7
1996.....	65.1	65.4	65.6	65.4
1995.....	64.2	64.7	65.0	65.1
1994.....	63.8	63.8	64.1	64.2
1993 <sup>b</sup> .....	63.7	63.9	64.2	64.2
1993.....	64.2	64.4	64.7	64.6
1992.....	64.0	63.9	64.3	64.4
1991.....	63.9	63.9	64.2	64.2
1990.....	64.0	63.7	64.0	64.1
1989 <sup>c</sup> .....	63.9	63.8	64.1	63.8
1989.....	63.9	63.9	64.0	63.8
1988.....	63.7	63.7	64.0	63.8
1987.....	63.8	63.8	64.2	64.1
1986.....	63.6	63.8	63.8	63.9
1985.....	64.1	64.1	63.9	63.5
1984.....	64.6	64.6	64.6	64.1
1983.....	64.7	64.7	64.8	64.4
1982.....	64.8	64.9	64.9	64.5
1981.....	65.6	65.3	65.6	65.2
1980.....	65.5	65.5	65.8	65.5

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates for the United States generally are 0.3 percent.

<sup>b</sup>Revised in 2002 to incorporate information collected in Census 2000, and in 1993 to reflect the results of the 1990 decennial census.

<sup>c</sup>Revised to reflect edit changes implemented in 1990.

Table 4SA shows the seasonally adjusted homeownership rates for the United States from 1980 to the present. (Research has shown that seasonality for homeownership rates is present.) When adjusted for seasonal variation, the current homeownership rate (68.9 percent) was not different from last year's rate (69.1 percent) or the rate last quarter (68.7 percent).

**Table 4SA. Homeownership Rates for the United States: 1980 to 2005**  
**Seasonally Adjusted** (in percent)

Year	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup> (Seasonally Adjusted)			
	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2005.....	69.2	68.8	68.7	↓ 68.9
2004.....	68.7	69.4	68.9	69.1
2003.....	68.1	68.2	68.3	68.5
2002 <sup>b</sup> .....	67.9	67.7	67.9	68.2
2001.....	67.6	67.8	67.9	67.9
2000.....	67.2	67.3	67.5	67.5
1999.....	66.8	66.7	66.8	66.9
1998.....	66.0	66.1	66.6	66.4
1997.....	65.5	65.8	65.8	65.7
1996.....	65.2	65.4	65.4	65.4
1995.....	64.4	64.8	64.8	65.1
1994.....	64.0	63.9	63.9	64.1
1993 <sup>b</sup> .....	63.8	64.0	64.0	64.1
1992.....	64.1	64.0	64.1	64.3
1991.....	64.0	64.1	64.0	64.1
1990.....	64.1	63.9	63.8	64.0
1989 <sup>c</sup> .....	64.0	63.9	63.9	63.7
1988.....	63.8	63.8	63.9	63.8
1987.....	63.9	63.9	64.1	64.1
1986.....	63.7	63.8	63.7	63.9
1985.....	64.1	64.1	63.8	63.6
1984.....	64.6	64.6	64.5	64.2
1983.....	64.7	64.7	64.6	64.5
1982.....	64.8	64.9	64.7	64.6
1981.....	65.6	65.4	65.4	65.3
1980.....	65.5	65.6	65.6	65.6

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates for the United States generally are 0.3 percent.

<sup>b</sup>Revised in 2002 to incorporate information collected in Census 2000, and in 1993 to reflect the results of the 1990 decennial census.

<sup>c</sup>Revised to reflect edit changes implemented in 1990.

The homeownership rate by region was highest in the Midwest (72.8 percent) during the fourth quarter 2005. The South (71.1 percent) ranked second, while the Northeast (65.4 percent) and the West (64.6 percent) were lowest, although they were not different from each other. In the Midwest, the homeownership rate was lower than the rate in fourth quarter 2004, while the rates for the other regions were not different from their respective rates last year.

**Table 5. Homeownership Rates for the United States and Regions: 2001 to 2005 (in percent)**

	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>				
Year/Quarter	United States	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
2005					
Fourth Quarter.....	69.0	65.4	72.8	71.1	64.6
Third Quarter.....	68.8	65.1	73.3	70.6	64.2
Second Quarter.....	68.6	64.7	73.4	70.4	63.8
First Quarter.....	69.1	65.4	73.1	71.1	64.9
2004					
Fourth Quarter.....	69.2	65.2	73.7	71.5	63.9
Third Quarter.....	69.0	64.4	73.8	71.0	64.7
Second Quarter.....	69.2	65.4	74.2	70.9	64.5
First Quarter.....	68.6	65.1	73.5	70.3	63.7
2003					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.6	64.7	73.5	70.5	63.8
Third Quarter.....	68.4	64.4	73.5	70.0	63.8
Second Quarter.....	68.0	64.2	72.8	69.9	63.2
First Quarter.....	68.0	64.2	72.9	69.9	62.8
2002 <sup>b</sup>					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.3	64.8	73.3	70.3	62.5
Third Quarter.....	68.0	64.6	73.2	69.5	62.7
Second Quarter.....	67.6	63.8	72.8	69.3	62.4
First Quarter.....	67.8	63.8	73.2	69.8	62.1
2002					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.3	64.9	73.3	70.3	62.6
Third Quarter.....	68.0	64.7	73.2	69.5	62.8
Second Quarter.....	67.6	63.9	72.8	69.3	62.4
First Quarter.....	67.8	63.9	73.1	69.9	62.2
2001					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.0	64.0	73.5	70.1	62.3
Third Quarter.....	68.1	64.1	72.9	70.1	63.1
Second Quarter.....	67.7	63.2	72.7	69.7	62.9
First Quarter.....	67.5	63.6	73.2	69.3	62.0

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by region generally are 0.5 percent.

<sup>b</sup>Revised to incorporate information collected in Census 2000.

For fourth quarter 2005, the homeownership rates by age of householder were highest for those age 55 to 64 and those 65 years and over (80.6 percent each). Ranked second were those age 45 to 54 years (76.7 percent), followed by the age category 35 to 44 years (69.7 percent) with the lowest rate for the under 35 years of age (43.1 percent) group. The rate for householders 55 to 64 years was lower than a year ago, while rates for the other age groups were not different from their corresponding rates last year.

**Table 6. Homeownership Rates by Age of Householder: 2001 to 2005 (in percent)**

Year/Quarter	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>					
	United States	Under 35 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	55 to 64 years	65 years and over
<b>2005</b>						
Fourth Quarter.....	69.0	43.1	69.7	76.7	80.6	80.6
Third Quarter.....	68.8	43.0	68.6	76.7	80.9	80.6
Second Quarter....	68.6	42.8	68.7	76.3	81.3	80.3
First Quarter.....	69.1	43.3	70.1	76.5	81.8	80.8
<b>2004</b>						
Fourth Quarter.....	69.2	43.3	70.0	77.4	81.6	80.5
Third Quarter.....	69.0	43.1	68.6	77.4	81.2	81.8
Second Quarter....	69.2	43.6	69.4	77.0	82.4	81.1
First Quarter.....	68.6	42.3	68.8	77.0	81.7	80.7
<b>2003</b>						
Fourth Quarter.....	68.6	42.7	69.0	77.2	81.3	80.8
Third Quarter.....	68.4	42.5	68.8	76.5	81.1	80.7
Second Quarter....	68.0	41.9	67.8	76.3	81.6	80.2
First Quarter.....	68.0	41.7	67.8	76.5	81.4	80.2
<b>2002<sup>b</sup></b>						
Fourth Quarter.....	68.3	42.0	69.0	76.4	81.5	80.8
Third Quarter.....	68.0	41.5	68.6	76.4	81.3	80.4
Second Quarter....	67.6	40.8	68.2	76.3	80.8	80.1
First Quarter.....	67.8	41.0	68.6	76.0	80.9	80.9
<b>2002</b>						
Fourth Quarter.....	68.3	42.0	69.0	76.4	81.5	80.8
Third Quarter.....	68.0	41.4	68.6	76.4	81.3	80.4
Second Quarter....	67.6	40.8	68.3	76.3	80.7	80.1
First Quarter.....	67.8	41.0	68.6	76.0	80.8	80.9
<b>2001</b>						
Fourth Quarter.....	68.0	42.2	68.2	76.2	81.4	80.7
Third Quarter.....	68.1	41.6	68.6	77.1	81.6	80.3
Second Quarter....	67.7	40.8	68.1	77.2	81.5	79.7
First Quarter.....	67.5	40.4	68.1	76.5	80.8	80.7

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by age of householder generally are 0.5 percent.

<sup>b</sup>Revised to incorporate information collected in Census 2000.

For the racial categories shown below, the homeownership rate for non-Hispanic White householders reporting a single race (76.0 percent) was highest, while the All Other Races householders (60.1 percent) ranked second, and single-race Black householders (48.0 percent) had the lowest rate in the current quarter. The rate for single-race Black householders was lower than last year, while rates for non-Hispanic White single-race householders and All Other Races householders were not different from their respective rates last year. The rate for Hispanic householders (who can be of any race) at 50.0 percent was higher than a year ago.

**Table 7. Homeownership Rates by Race and Ethnicity of Householder: 2002 to 2005 (in percent)**

Year/Quarter	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>				
	U.S.	Non-Hispanic White alone	Black Alone	All Other Races <sup>c</sup>	Hispanic (of any race)
2005					
Fourth Quarter.....	69.0	76.0	48.0 <sup>b</sup>	60.1	50.0
Third Quarter.....	68.8	75.7	48.1	59.9	49.1
Second Quarter.....	68.6	75.6	48.0	58.0	49.2
First Quarter.....	69.1	76.0	48.8	59.4	49.7
2004					
Fourth Quarter.....	69.2	76.2	49.1	58.9	48.9
Third Quarter.....	69.0	76.1	48.4	58.6	48.7
Second Quarter.....	69.2	76.2	49.7	58.7	47.4
First Quarter.....	68.6	75.5	49.3	58.2	47.3
2003					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.6	75.5	49.4	56.6 <sup>*</sup>	47.7
Third Quarter.....	68.4	75.7	48.0	56.2 <sup>*</sup>	46.1
Second Quarter.....	68.0	75.2	47.3	55.3 <sup>*</sup>	46.2
First Quarter.....	68.0	75.0	47.7	55.7	46.7
		Non-Hispanic White	Black	Other Races <sup>d</sup>	
2002 <sup>e</sup>					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.3	75.0	47.7	55.2	48.3
Third Quarter.....	68.0	74.9	47.3	54.0	47.1
Second Quarter.....	67.6	74.5	46.5	55.3	46.1
First Quarter.....	67.8	74.6	48.2	53.5	46.4

<sup>\*</sup>Revised 4/22/04.

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by race and ethnicity of householder generally are 0.3 percent for non-Hispanic White (single race) householders, 0.6 percent for Black (single race) householders, 0.8 percent for All Other Races householders, and 0.6 percent for Hispanic householders.

<sup>b</sup>The homeownership rate for fourth quarter 2005 for householders who reported Black whether or not they reported any other race was 47.9 percent, compared with a rate of 48.0 for those who reported only Black.

<sup>c</sup>Includes people who reported Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or American Indian or Alaska Native regardless of whether they reported any other race, as well as all other combinations of two or more races.

<sup>d</sup>Includes people who reported Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or American Indian or Alaska Native.

<sup>e</sup>Revised to incorporate information collected in Census 2000.

NOTE: Beginning in 2003, the question on race on the CPS was modified to comply with the revised standards for federal statistical agencies. Respondents may now report more than one race, but small sample sizes preclude showing all race categories. The question on Hispanic origin is asked separately, and is asked before the question on race. For further information on each major race group and the Two or More Races populations, see reports from the Census 2000 Brief series (C2KBR/01), available on the Census 2000 Web site at <http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/briefs.html>.



In fourth quarter 2005, the homeownership rate for households with family incomes greater than or equal to the median family income (84.3 percent) was not different from the rate a year ago, while the rate for those with family incomes less than the median family income (53.1 percent), was higher than the rate reported last year.

Table 8. **Homeownership Rates by Family Income: 2001 to 2005** (in percent)

Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>			
Year/Quarter	United States	Households with family income greater than or equal to the median family income <sup>b</sup>	Households with family income less than the median family income
2005			
Fourth Quarter.....	69.0	84.3	53.1
Third Quarter.....	68.8	83.7	52.8
Second Quarter.....	68.6	84.0	52.7
First Quarter.....	69.1	84.5	53.0
2004			
Fourth Quarter.....	69.2	84.6	52.5
Third Quarter.....	69.0	84.0	52.7
Second Quarter.....	69.2	83.9	53.1
First Quarter.....	68.6	83.8	51.5
2003			
Fourth Quarter.....	68.6	83.6	52.1
Third Quarter.....	68.4	83.7	52.1
Second Quarter.....	68.0	83.6	51.6
First Quarter.....	68.0	83.3	51.3
2002 <sup>c</sup>			
Fourth Quarter.....	68.3	83.2	52.4
Third Quarter.....	68.0	83.0	51.9
Second Quarter.....	67.6	82.2	51.5
First Quarter.....	67.8	82.0	52.4
2002			
Fourth Quarter.....	68.3	83.3	52.4
Third Quarter.....	68.0	83.0	51.9
Second Quarter.....	67.6	82.3	51.5
First Quarter.....	67.8	82.1	52.3
2001			
Fourth Quarter.....	68.0	82.2	53.0
Third Quarter.....	68.1	82.2	52.6
Second Quarter.....	67.7	82.0	51.7
First Quarter.....	67.5	81.7	51.6

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by family income generally are 0.3 percent.

<sup>b</sup>Based on families or primary individuals reporting income.

<sup>c</sup>Revised to incorporate information collected in Census 2000.

Note: This press release, along with more detailed data, is available on the Internet. Our Internet address is: [www.census.gov/hhes/www/hvs.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hvs.html)

The estimates in this release are based on a sample survey and therefore are subject to both sampling and non-sampling error. Sampling error is a result of not surveying the entire population. Non-sampling error occurs because accurate information cannot always be obtained.

The sample estimate and its standard error enable one to construct a confidence interval. A confidence interval is a measure of an estimate's reliability. The larger a confidence interval is in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. For example, the standard error on the estimated rental vacancy rate of 9.6 percent is 0.3 percentage points. Then the 90-percent confidence interval is calculated as 9.6 percent  $\pm$  (1.645 x 0.3), or 9.6 percent  $\pm$  0.5, or from 9.1 percent to 10.1 percent. If all possible samples were surveyed under essentially the same general conditions and the same sample design, and an estimate calculated from each sample, then 90 percent of the estimates would fall within the 90 percent confidence interval, in this case, from 9.1 percent to 10.1 percent.

Beginning with first quarter 2003, population controls that reflect the results of Census 2000 are used in the CPS/HVS estimation process. As a final additional step in the process, the estimates are controlled to independent housing counts used for the first time in order to produce a more accurate estimate of housing units. This new procedure should make the CPS/HVS estimates of housing units more consistent with other Census Bureau housing surveys. The new housing controls affect the estimate of vacant units in the sense that the estimates of total occupied and vacant units sum to the new control total. Vacancy *rates* and homeownership *rates* are not affected by this change.

The CPS/HVS also began computing first-stage factors (used for weighting purposes) based on year-round and seasonal counts of housing units from Census 2000 for the first quarter 2003. From 1980 to 2002, the CPS/HVS first-stage factors were based on year-round estimates only. The effect on the data is slight and the change should improve the counts of year-round and seasonal units. For more information on the effects of these changes, please see Source and Accuracy Statement at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/hvs.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hvs.html).

The question on race on the CPS was modified beginning in the first quarter 2003 to comply with new standards for federal statistical agencies. Respondents are now asked to report one or more races. The question on Hispanic origin is asked separately, and is asked before the question on race.

First stage factors for year-round vacant units have been corrected as of the second quarter 2004. Research has shown that this correction had no significant effect on the vacancy rates or homeownership rates.

The rental vacancy rate is the proportion of the rental inventory that is vacant for rent. In tables 1 and 2 the rates are computed using the following formula.

$$\text{Rental Vacancy Rate (\%)} = \frac{\left[ \frac{\text{Vacant year-round units for rent}}{\left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Renter} \\ \text{occupied} \\ \text{units} \end{array} \right) + \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Vacant year-round} \\ \text{units rented but} \\ \text{awaiting occupancy} \end{array} \right) + \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Vacant year-round} \\ \text{units for rent} \end{array} \right)} \right]}{\left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Renter} \\ \text{occupied} \\ \text{units} \end{array} \right) + \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Vacant year-round} \\ \text{units rented but} \\ \text{awaiting occupancy} \end{array} \right) + \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Vacant year-round} \\ \text{units for rent} \end{array} \right)} * 100$$

The homeowner vacancy rate is the proportion of the homeowner inventory that is vacant for sale. In tables 1 and 2 the rates are computed using the following formula.

$$\text{Homeowner Vacancy Rate (\%)} = \left[ \frac{\text{Vacant year-round units for sale only}}{\left( \text{Owner occupied units} \right) + \left( \text{Vacant year-round units sold but awaiting occupancy} \right) + \left( \text{Vacant year-round units for sale only} \right)} \right] * 100$$

The homeownership rate is the proportion of households that is owner-occupied. It is computed by dividing the number of households that are occupied by owners by the total number of occupied households (tables 4, 4SA, and 5).

$$\text{Homeownership Rate (\%)} = \left[ \frac{\text{Owner occupied housing units}}{\text{Total occupied housing units}} \right] * 100$$

For the homeownership rate for a specific characteristic (tables 6-8), use the owner and total number of units for that characteristic. For example, for the West region,

$$\text{Homeownership Rate (West) (\%)} = \left[ \frac{\text{Owner occupied housing units (West)}}{\text{Total occupied housing units (West)}} \right] * 100$$

The Housing Vacancy Survey uses a three-month average to produce housing vacancies. The fourth quarter 2005 is the first one to have three months (October, November, and December) of data available since Hurricane Katrina.

During this quarter, the Current Population Survey was conducted according to standard procedures. Efforts were made to contact households in all storm-affected areas. There were a few inaccessible housing units that were not interviewed. These units are not weighted as either occupied or vacant.

No units in Louisiana or Mississippi were classified as demolished or condemned. This was a slight departure from standard Current Population Survey procedure. In affected areas, all cases not interviewed this quarter will be revisited as originally scheduled in the following months to determine whether they are suitable for occupancy.